



1785-1960



175 YEARS  
SERVING NEW YORK



# HISTORY

of the  
General Society of  
Mechanics and Tradesmen  
of the City of New York

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THE GENERAL SOCIETY OF MECHANICS AND TRADESMEN  
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
20 WEST 44TH STREET, NEW YORK 36, N. Y.



*COVER: The drawing which appears on the cover of this brochure depicts two old-time goldbeaters at work. Goldbeating was typical of some of the early trades which qualified men for membership in the Society.*

Courtesy New York Historical Society. Bella C. Landauer Collection

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## Foreword

The year 1960 marks the 175th Anniversary of the founding of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen of the City of New York. As one means of commemorating this milestone in the history of the Society this booklet has been prepared. The editors have attempted to depict not only what the Society has accomplished during the past 175 years, but also its current program and its aspirations for the future. These aspirations can be summed up simply as continued service to the City, the State and the Nation through worthwhile educational and philanthropic activities. To those many persons who have made this objective possible this brochure is respectfully dedicated.

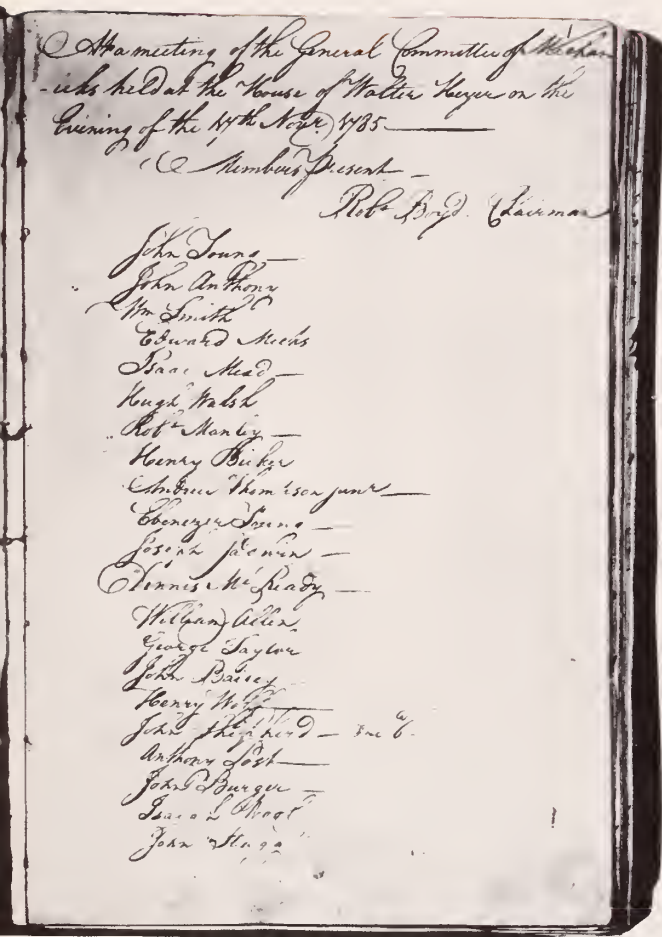
# Serving New York: 1785-1960

By Lawrence Martin

New York in 1785 was at a low point. The evacuation two years before of the last British troops had not helped economically. With relief and some exultation the citizens had watched the redcoats rowed off to the ships. The long occupation was over.

But as they turned back to their homes and shops their mood was somber. For years business had been practically at a standstill in their city of 23,000, whose living was made chiefly from its harbor and sea and river commerce, from imports and exports and the repair and servicing of ships. A great fire had destroyed much property, and the British had, as such soldiery always does, destroyed much. Thus far victory, the peace treaty, and the founding of a new nation had not brought prosperity. In addition New York's strong Tory minority had left civil war wounds for the community to heal.

The United States were (the verb they used is significant) less a nation than a huddle of mutually jealous ex-colonies. The treasuries of nation, state, and city were empty. The country had a flag but no minted money. Business was compelled to traffic in a welter of foreign currencies so complex a merchant had to keep at his elbow exchange tables of the foreign coins that did duty for local money: French and English crowns and guineas, johannes, Spanish doubloons, French pistoles and chequins, picayunes, moidores, and pounds, shillings, and pence. Newspapers warned against counterfeit coin; gilt copper, for instance, masqueraded as gold guineas. In the absence of



Reproduced above is a segment of the original minutes of the Society, dated November 17, 1785, when 22 "mechanics and tradesmen" met at a tavern on Pine Street near Broadway to form an organization for mutual aid.



dependable money, much business was done by barter.

Capital was lacking for launching ships and other enterprises. Willing hands and brains found no work, and the alms house in the vast meadow which is now City Hall Park was full. The municipality ended its first eighteen months as a government \$1,847.50 in the red. One out of seven adult males was confined to the debtor's jail in the course of the year, dependent for his own keep and the care and feeding of wife and children on the kindness of solvent friends.

Such was the condition of New York when on November 17, 1785, twenty-two "mechanics and tradesmen" came together in the large room of a tavern at Pine and Broadway and formed a society for mutual aid and for reviving business. Its first chairman was a blacksmith, his deputy a silversmith, the treasurer a ship chandler. Among others present were a pewterer, sailmaker, saddler, ship joiner, ship carpenter, potter, coach builder, shoe crimper, quill manufacturer, japanner, solderer, tallow candler, and

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bell hanger. Small business men we would today call most of them.

The stated objects of the new association (one of New York's three oldest still surviving) were to provide mutual help in sickness and distress (that debtor's jail a few blocks away), to succor the widows and orphans of fellow members who died propertyless, and "to encourage the mechanic interests of the city"—to do what they could to make business bloom again.

In the city directory for 1786 the Society



*The first permanent home of the Society was this building located at 239 Broadway. It served as the Society's headquarters from 1802 until 1831.*

had already taken the name by which it is still known, 175 years after its founding: The General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, and its forty-four members—double the original band—are listed. Its place in the directory is preceded by two societies of the well-born. The Society of the Cincinnati (an officers' American Legion which republican hearts feared was pro-aristocrat) headed by a major-general and state senator, shows Baron von Steuben as vice-president, and such honorary members as Lieut.-Gov. Cortlandt of Upper Manor, and General Morris. The other is the St. Andrews Society, of which the Hon. Robert R. Livingston, Esq., Chancellor of the State, was vice-president.

No title before, or "Esq." after, graced the name of any of the independent craftsmen. But they grew; they lasted.

New York then was the second American city. A poor second to Philadelphia, New York was a huddle of low buildings and narrow streets at the very bottom of the island. The built-up town ended at Grand Street, where still stood the barricade erected by the British. The land link to the north was Bowery Lane, the road to Boston. Broadway itself petered out in the frowsy meadow where the grim Bridewell, alms house, and debtor's jail stood side by side, backed by the military barracks. Beyond were fields and farms.

At the island's foot the present Battery was the garden of a fort, and the town gave notice that, "Those persons who have Goats, that keep about the Fort Garden, are desired to take notice, that unless they are taken care of, and prevented from destroying the fruit trees, disagreeable consequences will attend them." One Nathaniel Smith, not a Society member, advertised "Bears Grease for making the hair grow." A citizen, probably retrenching because of hard times, announced: "To be sold, a valuable Negro Woman, sold for no fault. She can bake, brew, wash, iron and cook, and can otherwise be well recommended."

There were crimes more violent than counterfeiting and coin-clipping. Crowds came out to the new gaol to see a white man and a Negro hanged for burglary. A deluge of petitions got the white man pardoned at the last moment, but the Negro was launched into eternity after several minutes of mishap when the rope slipped and caught under his chin. After dangling for two minutes he managed to indicate to his executioners that he wasn't being strangled. In the hard times, dire punishments failed to deter other burglars, who the same night broke into a store at Burling Slip and carried off an iron money-chest. Unable to force it open they broke into a blacksmith's (the Society chairman's own shop?) for the necessary tools. Their loot was a hundred pounds sterling.

The Society prospered. In little over a

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*Special Meeting of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen of the City of New York, held at Smith's hotel  
Thursday Evg December 16. 1799.*

*Present the President two Secretaries & a quorum of Members*

*Read, and approved the Minutes of the last Meeting*

*The President informed the Society that this Special Meeting was called in consequence of an Application in the following Words signed by some Members of the Society*

*Coming to the death of a beloved fellow Citizen Lieutenant General George Washington the the Subscribers being Members of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen of the City of New York do deem it expedient, and signify to you as our pleasure, that a Meeting of this Society be called on Thursday Evening next, at the usual time and place to devise proper Measures to be taken upon this Melancholy Occasion.*

*The President further informed the Society that in consequence of the General Committee Meeting on the last Evening the next day the President & one other member of the Society had attended at the request of several of the Members with whom he had conversed, that the General committee had appointed a sub-committee of 3 Members to whom they had referred every recommendation for the transaction on this Melancholy event, and that the said sub-committee had suggested the Society to appoint a Committee for the funeral Regiments of the General.*

In 1799 a special meeting of the Society was called "to devise proper measures to be taken upon the melancholy occasion" of the death of George Washington.

year it already had enough money in hand to spend seven pounds on an iron chest. In 1789 a local newspaper called its annual dinner, held in the tavern of Samuel Fraunces (President Washington's major-domo) an "elegant entertainment." An ingenious toast then offered has often been quoted by historians: "A cobweb pair of breeches, a

porcupine saddle, and a hard-trotting horse to all the enemies of freedom!" To the unfortunates in debtor's prison were sent the banquet's left-overs.

As the new government under President Washington organized itself in Federal Hall at Broad and Wall Streets and Alexander Hamilton's economic policy began to work, business stirred. As the nation's first capital New York was specially favored when in March, 1789, the city began to fill with senators, representatives, their households, and job-seekers. Prosperity arrived. George Washington's own household was numerous enough to call for an order of two hundred blankets. As the General took his morning ride on horseback along the Bowling Green and the Fort Garden, he was careful to acknowledge the salutes of even the humblest. But although mechanics and tradesmen, some of them members of the General Society, undoubtedly entered the presidential house in their working capacities, and conferred with the President (who took as great an interest in household matters as he did in affairs of state), it is unlikely that many of their class were ever invited as guests or received as callers. Republicanism was here, but the democracy of the common man had to wait two score years for another General-President, Andrew Jackson.

By 1792 the Society had flowered sufficiently to receive a charter of incorporation. All through these years it was corresponding with other groups, such as the Manufacturers' Society, and with associations of business men in other towns, and petitioning the state legislature, in the interests of industrial progress. Old documents reveal it to have been a prime mover in these affairs. By 1798 it had 466 members, and in 1802 it enters formal history again when several of its members participate in the building of New York's present City Hall, among them the architect, a master stone cutter, two master masons, a master carpenter, and a clerk.

In this same year the Society, having amassed a reserve of seven thousand dollars, bought a lot at the corner of Broadway and what is now Park Place, and erected its own home, Mechanics Hall. Gone were the days of meetings in the hired halls of taverns. It was a great step forward. The building was dedicated in the presence of the mayor and many distinguished citizens. At the same time the Society was taking care of fourteen widows and twenty-seven children on its pension rolls, and helping an occasional hard-pressed brother with his problem.

In seven years and two months the Mechanics and Tradesmen had come a long way, and the new four-story-and-basement building was evidence of the fact, with its kitchens, coffee room, great hall, drawing room, special club rooms, and bedrooms. Balls and concerts were held and rooms let, and the mortgage was soon paid off.

Although the Society made merry over its annual dinners and on parade, it was anything but an association of carousers and hail-fellows. These were men of substance and ambition. At the very beginning was passed a resolution still adhered to: there should be no smoking of "the tobacco-pipe" at any meeting. This in spite of the fact tobaccoists were among its members. Later there was to be some internal friction over the advisability of hiring the hall to Christy's Minstrels, America's first "Ethiopian Entertainment," some members feeling that theatricals were immoral. The Society held steadfastly to another rule: no politics. Few things display better the dignity and pride of the group at the time than this presidential address at the initiation of new members:

#### *Fellow-Citizens:*

*You have been regularly admitted a member of this Society; which mark of favor with which our institution has honored you is a happy result of those flattering recom-*



*mendations which we have received of your character. Let sobriety, industry, integrity, and uprightness of heart continue to be the ornaments of your name.*

*We now hail you brother! a delightful union, where the bond of friendship is benevolence. To dry the tear from misery's eye, to succor the afflicted, and save the sinking, is our present aim, and constituted an original and principal object with the founders of our institution. You are about to join your efforts to those of your brothers around you; a compliance with the tenor of our laws will entitle you to an equal participation of the privileges and benefits derived from this incorporation. May the interests, harmony, and reputation of this General Association be ever dear to you. On its private transactions be silent as the grave.*

The President then offered "the right hand of fellowship." The secrecy obligation has reference to those receiving aid.

In year 1810, the Society took another upward step when a delegation it sent to

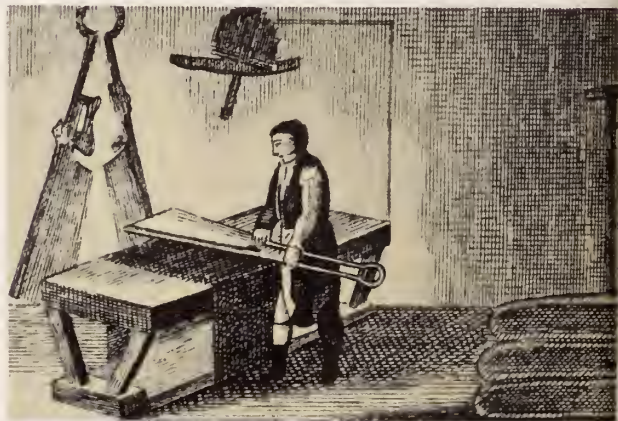
Albany returned with an act of the legislature establishing a Mechanics Bank—the fifth bank in this city of banks, which eventually became a branch of what is now the Chase Manhattan Bank.

Our "small business men" were far from being millionaires, but their businesses had prospered and their Society had given them security. "Mutual aid" having been pretty well assured, the members cast about for a further cause to serve. They had no need to look far, for a problem had confronted them from the beginning but had had to give precedence to the basic problem of making a bare living. This was—how to educate their children.

So used are we to a public school system from the grades through college that the idea of a city without free schools does not enter our minds. There were indeed two free schools in New York about the time the Society was founded: one in the alms house where two teachers presided over sixty-five children under eight; the other for children of freed slaves, founded by the So-



*Watch Maker*



*Broad Cloth Manufacturer*



ciety for the Manumission of Slaves. But even as late as 1822 the city was spending a miserly \$1.22 a year per pupil on schooling. A free school was operating, but invested with the odor of "charity." For those who had money there were many private schools and tutors.

After counting their assets, the Society members decided to establish a free school for their children which would admit outsiders for a modest fee. It was inaugurated in 1820 with seventy pupils, and a year later on ground now occupied by the Municipal Building, the Society's Mechanics Institute added an Apprentices' Library and a separate school for girls. Twelve members were chosen as the school committee to employ teachers, make regulations, and visit classes periodically. A six-man library committee was appointed to manage the first free library open not only to members and their families but to any ambitious boy. Here too the Society was a pioneer, for New York had only private and subscription libraries.

Antique America, the America of the

Founding Fathers (both national and Society), of knee breeches, hair in a queue and differences in dress between gentleman and commoner, was gone. Gone with it was the inferiority feeling toward the Mother Country. By the late 1820's the American knew that he was the citizen of a country on the way to greatness, and he was all too ready to tell curious English tourists, "Sir, we air a mighty people, and can lick eternal nature or stuff a mosquito!" He believed he was as good as anyone else, if not "a damn sight better!" He believed in his country as the Promised Land and in its free institutions as the pattern for all mankind. He was proud of it and of himself because he was showing the world that no divinely-elected or self-elected ruling class was necessary for running a country—that the working people, the mechanics and tradesmen, could do it as well, or "a damn sight better!"

The Society was the country's success in miniature. In 1833 it made a further advance by instituting free lecture courses for members, probably the first effort of its kind



*Carpenter*



*Japanner*

in New York. The fathers' and mothers as well as the children were interested in education. These lectures went on for 65 years, until 1898. Among the lecturers were such eminent men as Emerson, Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley, Wendell Phillips, and Bayard Taylor, the Lowell Thomas of that time.

The Society moved to new quarters farther up town in keeping with the northward advance of the city. In 1850 the school numbered five hundred pupils and twenty teachers. Taking advantage of the mid-century reopening of the enlarged library and reading room, the famous judge and editor, Mordecai M. Noah, who had spoken twenty-nine years before at the inauguration of the original school and library, said some eloquent and touching words:

*"A library is the Garden of Eden, in which is planted the tree of useful knowledge. We have that library here; we planted that little branch, which has grown into a goodly tree, fair to the eye, and we must water it by our liberality, until it bears golden fruit. This is peculiarly a benevolent institution. If a poor little ragged apprentice boy feels disposed to drink deep at the Pierian spring, where is he to go to slake his thirst? He can have access to no private library; if he enters the Society Library, which is a noble institution, he will be told that none but subscribers have liberty to read or to take home books to read. If he wanders into the valuable library, established through the munificence of the late Mr. Astor, he will be told that there is no provision which can embrace his case; he looks around with a sigh, and beholds splendidly bound books, many of which may never be opened; gilded lattices and cushioned seats; he sees the rich and well-educated enjoying the intellectual banquet; but alas! he who is in the search of knowledge is not an invited guest. He has only the inheritance of rags; his mind is clear, his desire to learn and improve is*

*intense, but his hands are black from labor, and his dress coarse from poverty.*

*"There is, however, still balm in Gilead for the poor apprentice boy; he has not been forgotten. He can enter here as proudly as those who enter other libraries; there is no rude janitor who will thrust him forth to live and die in ignorance; here he is a welcome guest. . . . Here are voyages and travels, books of fiction, wit, and humor, rich stores of history. He is acquainted with the institutions of his country, and his own rights as a freeman; and when he is out of his time, he steps forward as accomplished a gentleman as many who have taken their degrees at Oxford and at Eton. . . ."*

*"This, gentlemen, is the work of the founders of the Apprentices' Library. . . ."*

Judge Noah maintained that the state, which found money to aid private colleges for the well-to-do, should find some money also for the poor who, after passing out of the grade school, had nowhere to continue their education while working.

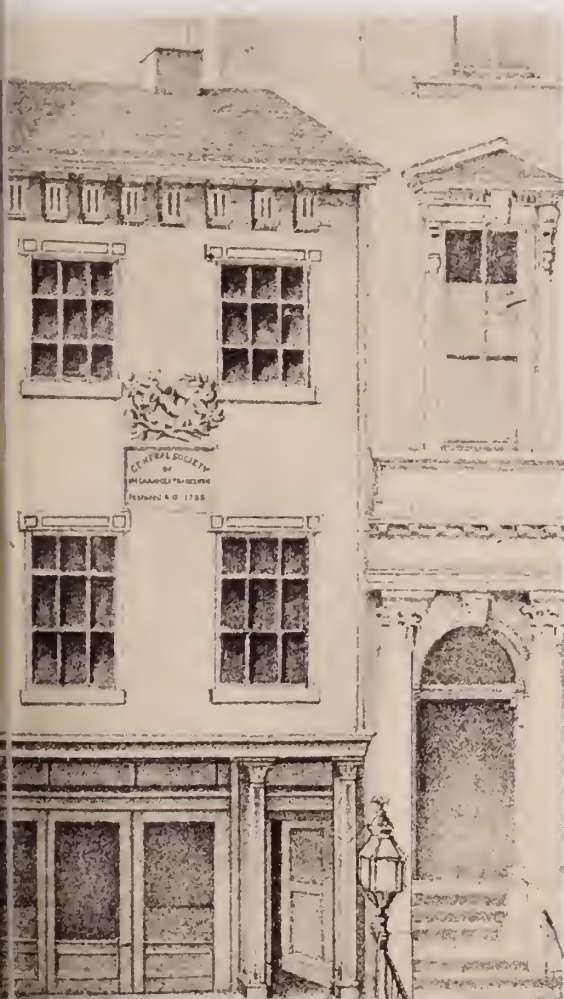
New York City was now the metropolis of America, a city of excitements, of Bennett, Greeley, Barnum, of a dozen palatial hotels and some vile slums. New Yorkers turned out in numbers whenever anything offered itself for a mass celebration. "Something extry is goin' on!" was the alert. No one loved a parade more than the New Yorker or could organize one better, and apparently no organization of New Yorkers, not even the volunteer fire companies, enjoyed marching in parades more than did the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen.

They marched in the funeral of Alexander Hamilton in 1804, their first such performance of record. However, there can be small doubt that the newly organized Society was on hand in a body to welcome George Washington when he arrived in April, 1789, to be sworn in as first President. One of the greatest civic binges in





*In 1831 the Society moved to a new home at 30-36 Crosby Street (left). Twelve years later it was relocated at 472 Broadway (below).*



which the Society joined was the celebration of the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. The members marched in the funerals of Robert Fulton and of various presidents, in the centennial celebration of British Evacuation in 1883, in the Columbian parade of 1892. Society delegations participated by invitation in the cornerstone-laying of the Washington Monument in 1847 and the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876.

Of the American mechanic and tradesman the keen French observer Chevalier noted in the 1830's: "He dresses like a member of Congress, and his womenfolk dress the same as those of a wealthy New York merchant. His house is warm, neat, comfortable; his table almost as plentifully provided as that of the wealthiest fellow-citizen." At the same time the English bluestocking, Harriet Martineau, watching a Manhattan parade, noted that the artisans made a brave showing in their glossy hats, watch charms, sleek coats, and doeskin gloves.

Our mechanics and tradesmen knew how to have a good time, to sing, drink toasts, joke, and march in processions and civic pageants dressed for the occasion. But they resisted any tendency to become a bohemian element. They did not ban the flowing bowl at meetings as they banned the tobacco-pipe, and certainly something sparkling was needed to go with toasts to reactionaries in cobweb breeches. They did, however, evict a saloon from property they owned, the brewers among them voting with the rest.

They spent good money building a separate school entrance for girls, but the important point is that in stuffer times than ours they had the courage to pioneer education for "young females." In 1887 they again led the way by giving instruction in stenog-



raphy and typewriting for young women, graduating forty-nine of them the first year. This was at a time when the general public, accepting the employment of women in sweatshops, was not yet ready to see them work in all-male offices.

A lack of unanimity appeared about allowing young women to use the library. But the perilous experiment succeeded, and the library committee reported in 1863 that "no inconvenience had been experienced from admitting females." Let us remember that in those days no well-bred gentlemen used the word "leg" in the presence of a lady, and that a few years before, a show-window display of corsets had provoked a riot in front of A. T. Stewart's big store.

In 1858 the nation suffered a severe depression which for a time took on panic proportions. The year's business failures numbered 5,123, with total liabilities of \$300,000,000. The Society was shaken, but stood firm, and its officers spoke out for honest work and against the craze for speculation and easy money.

In that same year, the New York public school system having gotten under way, the Society terminated its day school and instituted evening classes. This school flourishes today, in its one hundred second year, probably the oldest evening school in America, if not in the world.

When the Civil War broke out and tested the people as nothing before ever had, evidently no Copperhead appeared in the Society's midst. The members bought an \$8,000 government bond—about eighty thousand in today's dollars—and many enlisted in their "own" regiment, the Volunteer Engineers. The Society presented it with a stand of colors, and the flag it gave was the first to float over captured Forts Pulaski and Wagner, was fire-baptised at Petersburg and Richmond, and in at the finish at Appomattox. Brigadier-General James F. Hall wrote to the Society from HQ Army of the James in March, 1865:

*"The flag has now become a veteran, worn out in the service, and unfit for duty in the field; and we return it, to take its place with others honored by service with our brothers of the State of New York.*

*"The regimental color presented by you we still retain in the field, and we hope to bring it back for your disposition, after peace has been restored to our land, and we are permitted to go back to our homes and vocations of life."*

The Society sent books to its regiment, and resolutions which were read at dress parade to buck up morale by proving to the men in uniform that they remained in the hearts and minds of those back home.

In 1878 the Society moved farther uptown into a reconditioned mansion on East 16th Street. In 1881 the New York Trade School was founded by Colonel Richard Tylden Auchmuty, a member, and the Society established scholarships in it for ambitious youths.

In 1885 it celebrated its first hundred years with a banquet at Delmonico's. Reported in the press more fully than the one in Fraunces' tavern in 1789, it was a far grander affair. Reporters noted that among the celebrants were "men who had carved great fortunes from the humblest and hardest beginnings. The whole scene was a tribute to honest labor."

As the twentieth century approached, the Society found it necessary to look for larger quarters for its offices, school and library, and it purchased its present building at 16-24 West 44th Street by an exchange of real estate valued at \$350,000. Between 1899 and 1908 gifts from Andrew Carnegie totalling \$527,000, and from Amos F. Eno and his estate between 1915 and 1924 valued at \$2,500,000, enriched the Society and its work in all branches.

A number of other gifts through the years have also been of key importance in furthering the Society's objectives. These include the Alexander Walker Fund, the



*This old wood engraving depicts a lithographer's shop.*

Courtesy New York Historical Society, Bella C. Landauer Collection

George E. Hoe Prize Fund, the John M. Mossman Museum Fund, the Daniel D. Wright Pension Fund, the Haughian-Walker Library Fund, the Charles A. Cowan Trade School Scholarship Fund, the George D. Hilyard Fund, the Charles J. Richter Fund, the Robert Christie Fund, and many other gifts and bequests, both large and small, which have enabled the Society to move forward with the times.

Thus, for the greater part of its history, the philanthropic and educational work of

the Society has been sped by members and well-wishers and by those who got their start toward success thanks to its free schooling. One typical example among many is the George E. Hoe Prize Fund. In 1858 young George Hoe won a prize in Mechanics Institute. This triumph gave him such a lift that thirty-eight years later, when he became the Society's president, he donated \$500 for a student prize, and kept adding to this until he had given a total of \$15,000.

Besides direct money bequests, whole pri-



vate libraries have been donated, a hospital bed in perpetuity, cemetery lots for those who might die without making burial provision, and scholarships in various schools.

In 1956 City Hall was rededicated. Several members of the Society helped to erect this building in 1802. Members and their guests shed their twentieth-century garments in the Broadway office of Past President Hagstrom, changing into replicas of the clothes worn by their brothers 154 years

earlier. They assembled at the Bowling Green, and carrying the Society's banner with its inscribed motto, "By Hammer and Hand All Arts Do Stand," marched with other societies to the City Hall and took part in the ceremonies. It was a touching and picturesque occasion.

Three additional events which are held each year by the Society, are Flag Day Celebration, the ceremonies commemorating Independence Day and the carrying of the Society banners at the United Patriotic service in Cathedral of St. John The Divine.

A hundred and seventy-five years old the Society, venerable and still young, looks back with pardonable pride on a long history of good works from a small and desperate beginning in 1785, when New York was anxious and economically stagnant, part of a new-born Republic which had yet to find its bearings.

Its help to members and their families victimized by adversity continues. Its library has grown to more than 139,000 volumes, as valuable to research scholars and engineers as to young learners. In its Mossman Collection of Locks it has a unique treasure. Its school is an inspiring hive of evening activity, where more than two thousand youths are learning about basic electricity, trigonometry, commercial art, several forms of drafting, electronics, steel detailing, jewelry designing, and many other skills and disciplines.

The membership, 250 strong, is carefully chosen. The Society, as always, welcomes new adherents to carry on the work begun in days when its first members made small-clothes, silver shoe buckles, and three-cornered hats, horse-drawn coaches and tallow candles, pewter ware and quill pens, and the ribs and keels, sails and figureheads, of schooners and clipper ships.

From 1960's vantage point, it is a long, honorable record.



*Fourth location of the Society was this building at 18 East 16th Street. This served as headquarters from 1877 until 1898 when the Society moved to its present location at 20 West 44th Street (shown on cover of this brochure).*





*Officers and members of the Society are shown above during a monthly meeting in the Assembly Room. Starting from a small beginning as a guild of mechanics and tradesmen, the Society today carries on important work which goes considerably beyond its original objectives.*

## The Society Today

More than 100,000 men have benefited from the free evening educational opportunities provided by the Society's Mechanics Institute. Operation of the Institute is made possible from endowment funds and donations from industry and from former students and others interested in maintaining this unique New York educational facility. An important adjunct to the Institute is the Society's Library which meets not only the reference needs of students at the Institute, but the reading needs of the public as well.

Thus, the original objective of the Society, to form an organization for mutual aid among mechanics and tradesmen, has been greatly broadened in keeping with the more diverse needs of modern times. It is this concept of service which has enabled the Society to expand its activities through the years.



*Primary purpose of the Institute is to provide evening instruction for men with daytime jobs who want to learn more about their specific fields.*

## Mechanics Institute

*A free evening technical school meeting the needs of the building trades*

Mechanics Institute is an evening school which furnishes instruction in specialized fields. Its primary purpose is to assist men who have jobs during the day to become more proficient in their work and thereby increase their usefulness in industry. For the most part these men are between 25 and 30 years old and usually married, who for some reason interrupted their formal education to begin work at an early age.

After working for some time they realize the limitations arising from inadequate knowledge. Seasoned by their experience in work requiring manual dexterity and physical capacity, they conclude that the time has come to increase their understanding of theory and planning as applied to their jobs.

For example, a young man may start out as a construction laborer and progress to apprentice carpenter. In time, with considerable experience gained on the job, he hopes to become an assistant foreman and

work his way up. With the economic pressure of a growing family he feels that he can progress more rapidly and with more certainty provided he learns to read blueprints, understands specifications and can undertake cost estimating. He finds that Mechanics Institute has classes in each of these subjects as well as other phases of building construction.

Mechanics Institute specializes in subjects related to the building trades. In fact, the School has trained more men for the building construction industry than any other institution in the nation. It is not a trade school, as there are no shops or tool instruction. A trade is learned either at a trade school or on the job. Mechanics Institute provides the necessary technical information leading to advancement. Classes include instruction in other fields such as the electrical industry and the machine trades. A list of the classes and their applications to various industries appears on Page 18.

## SCHOOL FOUNDED IN 1820

The objectives of the school have been formulated over a considerable period of time. The school was founded in 1820 by a group of employers interested in education long before the start of the public school system in New York. From 1820 to 1858 instruction was offered to the children of Society members and a few others to provide schooling which was not readily available elsewhere.

By 1858, when the public school system had been sufficiently developed, this daytime instruction was replaced with evening instruction. From 1858 to 1900 the school was of limited size and scope. But in 1900 the school property on 44th Street was purchased and the present program started with 174 students. This enrollment grew steadily to a student body of some 4,000. With the decline in the purchasing power of the dollar, however, attendance today must be kept at approximately 2,200 students. More than 100,000 men have attended the Institute since 1900.

Mechanics Institute is operated without charge to its students. Operating funds come from endowments. At present, this income is augmented by annual donations from industry, former students and others interested in maintaining the activities of the school. The future of Mechanics Institute, as well as its past, is dependent upon contributions to expand its endowment. In this respect, a large number of small donations is as important as a few large gifts.

## BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

One of the Institute's most popular fields of study is the building construction program which, like other courses, comprises a three-year program leading to a diploma. The objectives of this program are to develop skills and techniques in architectural drafting and blueprint reading as applied to the

building trades; to study methods and materials of building construction and to give practice in architectural design.

About three-quarters of the time is spent in drafting, and about one-quarter in lectures and discussions on building materials, methods of construction, soils and foundations, drainage, safe loads, finishing, painting and decorating, site planning, zoning and building codes, specifications, planning and design. When a student finishes this course, no matter what his specialty may be, he has gained an understanding of working drawings and building materials which enables him to know his job in relation to the whole building construction project of which he is a part.

In the first year of architectural drafting, the students learn the details of frame construction: doors, windows, framing, joints, cornices, etc. At the same time he is also learning about building materials: sheathing, types of bonding in brick work, lath construction, lumber, and new glass materials.

In the second year attention is turned to the principles of planning in frame and masonry construction. Here the students make a complete set of working drawings for a small frame house and detailed drawings for its interior fittings.

In the third year they draw a more elaborate set of plans for a larger house. During this work the students also learn how the zoning and building code requirements apply to the project. If a student is able to complete his assigned projects before the school term is over, he spends the remaining time on work of particular benefit in his special trade. Individual supervision from the instructor is a part of this instruction.

## MECHANICAL DRAFTING

In the Mechanical Drafting department students may be machinists, sheet-metal workers, or draftsmen in almost any kind of manufacturing establishment where blue-



prints are used. The first two years of the drafting courses deal with elementary principles and conventions and the principles of projection as applied to working drawings. The work is largely devoted to detail and assembly drawings of various machine parts.

The third year, however, allows the student latitude to specialize. His interest may center on machine drafting, electrical drafting, patent office drafting, ship drafting, topographical drafting, tool and die design, or drafting of gears and cams. Lectures and problem-solving classes accompany the drafting sessions.

The Institute makes every effort to keep abreast of the times and needs of industry. An example is the course in structural steel detailing. With many new office buildings being erected in midtown Manhattan during recent years a group of structural steel firms asked Mechanics Institute to provide instruction in this subject. The elementary class covers drawing, office procedure, and fundamentals of simple beam and column detailing. Current trade practices are followed from actual jobs under construction.

In the advanced class emphasis is placed on the derivation of co-efficients for rivet groups and their application in making up details of wing plates, brackets, connection angles, beam web reinforcing and stiffened seats. Plate girders and trusses are fully discussed with an eye to producing a first-class, complete and workmanlike drawing. Throughout the course, full consideration is given to erection clearances, ordering clearances, and the latest riveting, bolting and welding techniques.

### ELECTRICAL CLASSES

Another group of courses is centered on the needs of workers in the electrical industries. For example, men employed by the New York Telephone Company, Western Union, Consolidated Edison, and other large

and small companies come to this department to obtain needed background. They get their practical experience in the daytime in electrical installation, maintenance and repair. In night classes at the Institute they participate in lectures, discussions, and laboratory and problem work in electrical circuits.

In the first year a student learns the fundamentals of electricity and elementary mathematics to solve simple circuit problems. The following year he advances to the study of generators, motors and auxiliary equipment, such as starting boxes and relays together with alternating current theory. With this foundation he is ready to specialize during his third year in such an area as industrial electrical controls, including limit switches, timers, counters, valves and allied units combined in simple circuits. This option provides the student with the necessary foundation for layout for automation supplemented by the fundamentals of electronics. Or the student may choose the option of electric power transmission and distribution, covering high-voltage transmission lines, system interconnection and distribution systems for office buildings and industry.

### PLUMBING

Another course related to building construction is plumbing and sanitation, which is limited to those in the plumbing trade. The first year centers around work in plumbing layouts, coupled with study of the plumbing code. It is accompanied by lectures on plumbing fixtures and metals and their uses in plumbing. The second year also includes study of the plumbing code plus lectures on soil, waste, vent lines, tanks, and the principles of sanitation. The third year is devoted to plumbing design for large apartment buildings, particularly piping. Also covered are multiple dwelling specifications, inspection duties, and engineering principles.

## COMMERCIAL ART

The commercial art department is limited to those who work in this field. It offers workshop instruction in all phases of drawing, media, copy layout, typography, poster and package design, and lettering. One of the specialties is jewelry design, which is not available at any other school in New York City.

## INSTRUCTORS

Mechanics Institute is constantly modifying its curriculum to incorporate the best of current experience and practice. The unique reputation of the school among employers stems largely from the quality of its instructors. These men are engaged in industry during the day and therefore able to bring into their classes up-to-the-minute, practical experience. This experience is of untold value in stimulating the growth and attainments of the student body. Many of the instructors are graduates of Mechanics Institute and are anxious to help others as they were helped in earlier years.

## COOPERATION WITH INDUSTRY

Another factor reflected in the current school administration is close cooperation between the school and industry. The school helps to supply industry with better trained technicians. Industry participates by furnishing guest lecturers. Also, industrial films bring before the classes graphically the materials and methods of construction used today. Industry also participates financially through donations to the school. Re-

ciprocally, the school maintains an employment service which enables students, during their course of study, to advance to higher and more productive positions.

## GRADUATES

Many graduates of Mechanics Institute have started their own businesses. For example, the Dykes Lumber Company, a firm with branches all over the city, was founded by Andrew H. Dykes, a Mechanics Institute graduate and a Past President of the Society. A graduate of the mechanical drafting course Harry S. Wheller became president of the L. J. Wing Manufacturing Company, which produces air-handling and power-plant machinery including turbines, unit heaters, fog eliminators, fans, blowers, and exhausters. The founder of the Hagstrom Company, a leading map-making publisher, is Andrew G. Hagstrom, a Mechanics Institute graduate and a Past President of the Society. He now employs 80 men, many of them, like himself, graduates of the Institute, and he has given much of his own time to teach evening classes. All three of these graduates have had a long active association with Mechanics Institute. Each has served on the school committee, and each has been elected to membership in the parent organization, the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen. These three varied and successful businesses illustrate the breadth of opportunities open to enterprising men who have had the sound training that Mechanics Institute offers. They typify the important role which the Institute is playing in the industrial life of the metropolitan area.

### *Mechanics Institute Classroom Subjects*

#### **CONSTRUCTION BUILDING**

Blueprint Reading  
Architectural Drafting  
Structural Steel Detailing  
Building Codes  
Specifications  
Cost Estimating  
Construction Superintendence

#### **PLUMBING**

Plumbing Layouts  
Plumbing Drafting  
Pipe Sizing  
Fixtures  
Plumbing Code  
Sanitation  
Inspection

#### **MATHEMATICS**

Vocational Mathematics  
Algebra  
Trigonometry  
Slide Rule  
Structural Mechanics  
Electrical Mathematics

#### **ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY**

Basic Electricity  
Direct Currents  
Alternating Currents  
Motors and Generators  
Electrical Controls  
Automation  
Electronics  
Power Transmission  
Distribution Systems

#### **MACHINE TRADES**

Blueprint Reading  
Mechanical Drafting  
Electrical Drafting  
Sheet Metal Drafting  
Technical Sketching  
Cams and Gears  
Tool and Die Design

#### **COMMERCIAL ART**

Freehand Drawing  
Rendering  
Advertising Layouts  
Lettering  
Posters  
Package Design  
Typography  
Jewelry Design

*Classes at the Institute offer laboratory work as well as lectures and discussions. School has trained more men for the building construction industry than any other institution in the nation.*







*Library offers more than 139,000 volumes of fiction, non-fiction and reference books.*

## Library

The Library was organized and put into active operation in 1820, and was considered so important an event that the Mayor of the City, members of the Legislature and the Common Council were present. Books were loaned for the first time and the circulating Library system was inaugurated, although at that time books were loaned only to apprentices. Ten years later the privilege was extended to members of the Society at an annual fee of one dollar. In 1863 the use of the Library and reading rooms was extended free to wounded soldiers and sailors.

Having served so well the apprentices of the city, the Library became so popular that the Society was compelled to broaden its scope and allow other readers its use. In 1898, the Society voted to drop the name "Apprentices Library," owing to the waning apprenticeship system which has since become practically unknown in the true sense of the word. Thereupon the name was changed to the "Free Library of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen," although the change had very little effect upon the Library. It has continued to function up to the present time and is a most important factor in connection with the Society's educational work as well as in meeting the needs of the reading public. This is shown by the remarkable recent increase in circulation.

The Library contains more than 139,000 volumes of fiction, non-fiction and reference books, all of which are widely used for lending and consultation. The regular issues of the quarterly bulletin published by the Executive Committee furnish a diversified list of popular and new acquisitions to the Library.

One of the important services of the Library is accomplished through employment of a qualified librarian who assists students seeking technical knowledge relating to their subjects.

The Library is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9 A.M. to 7 P.M. and Friday from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. during October through March. During April through September, it is open Monday through Friday from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. The Library is closed on Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays.



*Mossman collection of locks is comprised of 400 different types. A book "The Lure of the Lock," describes in detail this unusual collection.*

## The Museum and the Mossman Collection of Locks



The unique and distinguished collection of about 400 locks, which comprise the John M. Mossman Lock Collection in the Museum of the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, is truly a fascinating exhibit.

The collection was donated to the Society in 1903 by Brother John M. Mossman, who accompanied his gift with the sum of \$5,000, the interest of which is to be used for the care of the locks.

Brother J. Malcolm Mossman, son of the original donor, inspired by his father's interest in this remarkable collection, in 1932 added another \$5,000 to the fund, making a total of \$10,000.

Most of the locks in the collection date from 1850 to 1912, almost paralleling the span of life of Brother Mossman, Sr. The development of the timelock is shown almost in complete sequence.

"The Lure of the Lock", the catalogue of the Lock Collection, was published in 1928 and still continues to attract interest from all parts of the world. This book may be purchased in the office of the Secretary. The first printing of "The Lure of the Lock" having been exhausted in 1954, new copies were printed and are now available.

A cordial invitation is extended to the public to visit the Collection on the second floor of the Mechanics Institute building.

In addition to the Mossman Lock Collection, the Museum offers a collection of other articles of historical and mechanical interest which are well catalogued, mounted and displayed. The collection includes original manuscripts, medallions, coins, paper money, firearms, and books and curios of various kinds, many of them of antiquity.

A booklet containing the list of the exhibits in the Museum may be obtained from the Secretary.

## George E. Hoe Prize Fund

The George E. Hoe Prize Fund provides for outstanding scholarship or extra proficiency by students of Mechanics Institute.

The Fund now amounts to a total of \$15,000 and the interest derived from this Fund is used for distribution of the prizes, according to the determination of the school committee of the society.

The Fund was made possible by legacies from the late George E. Hoe, who was graduated from the Mechanics school in 1858. Brother Hoe was president of the society in 1896, having served on the school committee prior to that time. Following his term as president he served on the Finance Committee of the society.

## Trade School Scholarships

While higher education plays a vital role in the world's affairs, society also needs men skilled in the use of their hands. The New York Trade School not only offers opportunities to young men to become skilled craftsmen but provides worthwhile comradeship, broadening in its influence, which increases the trainee's on-the-job assets.

The scholarships offered by the Society since 1882 at the New York Trade School are open to young men of limited income working in various trades who are mechanically inclined and to students and graduates of the Mechanics Institute. (Mechanics Institute itself is not a trade school, since it has no shops or tool instruction.)

The Trade School Committee of the Society considers carefully the applications received. Each potential student is then interviewed, to measure as nearly as possible his natural aptitudes and capacity to learn.

The Committee makes periodical visits to the New York Trade School to keep in touch with the progress of the students to whom scholarships have been awarded and to encourage them to successful efforts.

Information regarding these scholarships may be obtained from the Secretary of the Society.



## Pension Program

The fundamental purposes for which the Society was created were "the cultivation of a feeling of fraternity and brotherhood among the members, the support of indigent members and of their widows and minor children, if indigent."

The Society has faithfully and consistently adhered to the paramount purposes which prompted its creation.

This portion of the Society's work has been carefully managed by what was first known as "The Board of Overseers of the Indigent," then as the "Almoners of the Society" and now as the Pension Committee, whose duty it is to exercise a fatherly care over the Society's beneficiaries. The Committee bestows deserving consideration on its members and widows of members who, through adversity, have encountered hardships.

Brother Daniel D. Wright, former Treasurer of the Society, in 1892 established a widow's pension fund which in 1908 was augmented by his son, a former Secretary. The fund now amounts to \$12,902.15. From the interest earned on this fund, a portion is distributed annually among the widows on the roll. This brings added income when most needed and is in addition to the pensions advanced monthly to those entitled to receive them.

## Ann Boyd Orr Hospital Bed

The establishment in 1920 of a bed in perpetuity at the Presbyterian Hospital by Miss Margaret J. Orr, in honor of her mother, Mrs. Ann Boyd Orr, for the benefit and privilege of the Society, continues to be of great usefulness in cases of need.

The establishment of this facility has proved so great a blessing to those needing it that no finer gift or bequest could be made to the Society than one which would provide an additional facility of this type.

# Membership

The words, "Mechanics and Tradesmen", as they appear in the title of the Society, had great significance in early times.

When the Society was founded in 1785 there were no railroads, ocean liners, motor cars, telephones, radios or airplanes. Since that time, because of the many changes that have taken place in industry, a number of trades have vanished and new ones appeared.

To qualify for membership in the Society a man must be a citizen of the United States and a "mechanic" or a "tradesman."

A "mechanic" is defined as a person who is, or has been engaged in the manufacture or production of a finished product from the raw material; also one who employs or directs those so employed; also one who is engaged in related fields of activity.

A "tradesman" is defined as a person who deals in, or has dealt in raw or finished products from a distributive as well as a speculative standpoint; also one who employs or directs those so employed; also one who is engaged in related fields of activity.

"Related fields of activity" is defined as any art or profession having close contact with production or trade and contributing substantially to their advancement.

The purposes of the Society are well known to its membership. An important factor in fulfilling those purposes is to aggressively seek out and invite representative and interested men to take part in the Society's activities so that its work may be broadened and carried on for many years to come.

In meeting this problem, careful consideration is given by the Membership Committee to the qualifications of candidates for membership and careful judgment is exercised in the selection of members from those whose names are proposed.

## Eligibility for Membership

Applicant must be a citizen of the United States and a Mechanic or Tradesman.

The name of every person applying for membership, together with his art or trade, present occupation, place of business and residence, shall be referred by the Society to the Membership Committee, accompanied by the recommendation of at least four members who in their own knowledge do in writing vouch for the character and qualifications of the candidate. If the Membership Committee find him to be eligible, the applicant is then reported to the Society to ballot on the question of admission to membership.

Following are listed a number of occupations which the Society accepts. It will be noted that the list contains some trades which are now obsolete, but the Executive Committee decided not to delete these trades, since they serve to demonstrate the Society's continuity through the economic and industrial changes of the past one hundred and seventy-five years.

## ALLIED BUILDING TRADES

Boiler and Pipe Covering Workers	Metal Doors and Windows
Boiler Makers, etc.	Metallic Furring and Lathing
Bolt Manufacturers	Mosaic Workers
Brass Workers	Ornamental Iron Workers
Bronze Workers and Tablet Makers	Painters and Decorators
Carpenters	Parquet Flooring
Casting Manufacturers and Workers	Plasterers
Cement Workers	Plumbers
Dealers in Building Materials	Refrigeration
Decorative Glass Workers	Roofing and Water Proofers
Electricians	Sash Makers
Elevator Manufacturers	Sheet Metal Workers
Gas Fitters	Shorers
Hardware Dealers	Shovel Manufacturers
Hardware Manufacturers	Skylights
House Movers	Slaters
Joiners	Stair Builders
Kalsomine and Metal Covered Work	Steam Heating Workers
Ladder Manufacturers	Stone Cutters
Lamp and Lighting Fixture Workers	Stone Setters
Lathing	Structural Steel Workers
Locksmiths	Terra Cotta Workers
Lumber Dealers and Workers	Tile Contractors
Marble Workers	Ventilating and Heating Workers
Masons	Wire Work
Material Hoisters	Wood Workers

## VARIOUS OTHER TRADES

Artist on Glass	Electrical Engineer
Asphalt Workers	Electrotypers
Automobile Maker	Enameler
Belting and Leather Goods	Engravers
Boat Builder	Furrier
Book Binder	Gilder
Boot and Shoe Maker	Glass Cutter
Boot Crimper	Goldbeater
Cabinet Maker	Hatter
Carriage Maker	Japanner
Carver (Wood and Stone)	Jeweler
Chair Maker	Jewelry Trade
Civil Engineer	Lapidary
Clothier	Linens
Coach Maker	Lithographers
Construction Engineer	Luggage Maker
Cooper	Mahogany Sawyer
Cordwainer	Mechanical Engineer
Costumer	Morocco Dresser
Cotton Spinner	Paver
Currier	Picture Framer
Die Makers	Pilot
Dock Builder	Printers
Draper	Radio Engineer
Dressgoods Maker	Rigger



Saddler  
Sail Maker  
Sculptor  
Ship Carpenter  
Shipwright  
Silver Plater  
Silversmith  
Spar Maker  
Stereotypers  
Stevedore  
Stone Flagger  
Straw Hat Maker  
Suspender Maker

Tailor  
Tanner  
Television Engineer  
Tin Plate Workers  
Turner  
Type Founders  
Upholsterer  
Vault Lights  
Watch Maker  
Weavers  
Wheelwright  
Whip Maker

## MANUFACTURERS

Aeroplane Manufacturer  
Automobile Manufacturer  
Awning Manufacturer  
Bottle Manufacturer  
Box Manufacturer  
Broad Cloth Manufacturer  
Brass Manufacturer  
Brush Manufacturer  
Burlap Manufacturer  
Button Manufacturer  
Cane Manufacturer  
Carpet and Rug Manufacturer  
Chemical Manufacturer  
Cigar Manufacturer  
Coffee Roasters  
Comb Manufacturer  
Cotton Goods Manufacturer  
Electronic Equipment Manufacturer  
Envelope Manufacturer  
Feather Maker  
Flag Maker  
Frame Maker  
Furniture Manufacturer  
Gas Appliance Manufacturer  
Gunsmith  
Ice Manufacturer  
Lens Manufacturer

Linoleum Manufacturer  
Match Case Manufacturer  
Miller  
Office Equipment Manufacturer  
Organ Builder  
Paint Manufacturer  
Paper Manufacturer  
Piano Manufacturer  
Plumbing Supplies  
Pocket Book Manufacturer  
Pottery and Glass Ware Manufacturer  
Pump Manufacturer  
Quill Manufacturer  
Radio Manufacturer  
Railroad Equipment Manufacturer  
Refrigerator Manufacturer  
Rope Manufacturer  
Safe and Vault Manufacturer  
Shade Manufacturer  
Soap Manufacturer  
Soda Water Manufacturer  
Starch Manufacturer  
Stove and Stove Repair Manufacturer  
Sugar Refiner  
Tallow Candler  
Television Manufacturer  
Umbrella Manufacturer

## MISCELLANEOUS

Baker  
Bell Hanger  
Blacksmith  
Coal Dealer  
Coal Miner  
Confectioner  
Dentist (Mechanical)  
Gardener

Grocer  
Laundry Operator  
Machinist  
Photographer  
Stationer  
Stove Dealer  
Taxidermist  
Tobacconist



*A comprehensive committee system insures careful stewardship of the Society's educational and philanthropic work. Shown here is a typical committee in session.*

## Administration

Administration of the Society's affairs is carried out through elected officers and a complete committee system.

### OFFICERS

The officers of the Society are the President, Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary. They are elected annually and perform the duties of their respective offices in accordance with the By-Laws of the Society.

The officers are ex-officio members of all committees, except that the Treasurer does not serve on the Auditing Committee. Except for the elected members of the Finance Committee, members are appointed by the President. There follows a description of the various committees and the responsibilities of each:

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee meets monthly and consists of the officers, and also nine other members of the Society who are elected for three-year terms.

The Committee has general management and control of all buildings, land and other properties of the Society. A sub-committee known as the Building Committee carries out this important function and reports to the Finance Committee.

The Committee is the custodian of the Treasurer's Bond and receives all appropriations, donations or bequests that may be made to the Society. The Committee has charge of all separate funds and has power to invest the funds of the Society in accordance with the by-laws.

The Committee approves for payment, from its appropriations, salaries, taxes and all other items of expense not otherwise provided for in the by-laws. All bills must be duly certified by the chairman and the secretary and transmitted to the Auditing Committee. The Committee prepares and presents to the Executive Committee at its

December meeting, a statement of the probable receipts of the Society for the following year.

The Committee makes a quarterly report to the Society of its receipts and expenditures and on the status of all invested funds. At the Annual Meeting of the Society, a full report is made of all transactions during the year.

### PENSION COMMITTEE

The Pension Committee consists of 12 members of the Society. The Committee investigates all applications made by or on behalf of any member of the Society, his widow, or children under 18 years of age of a deceased member, and determines, subject to the approval of the Society and in accordance with the by-laws, the action to be taken.

The Committee gives constant and close attention to the care of members who have been unfortunate in business or otherwise and of widows and minor children of members. The Committee visits and contacts all pensioners.

### SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committee consists of 12 members of the Society. The Committee meets monthly and has supervision of schools or classes maintained by the Society, employs the Director and instructors or other persons therein engaged, and makes rules and regulations for the admission of students and the government of the school.

There are two sub-committees known as the Students Committee and the Plan and Scope Committee which render great assistance to the School Committee in fulfilling its responsibility. Tuition in all classes is free.

### LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Library Committee consists of 12 members of the Society. The Committee meets monthly and superintends the libraries and reading rooms maintained by the Society. The Committee employs the librarian and any other persons therein engaged, and supplies the libraries and reading rooms with publications, subject to the approval of the Society.

The Committee strives to maintain the forward-looking tradition of the Library so that it may continue to promote the Society's education work as well as meet the needs of the public.

### LITERARY COMMITTEE

The Literary Committee consists of 12 members of the Society. The Committee meets monthly and provides lectures and other programs to promote the objects of the Society and the intellectual improvement of its members.

### TRADE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Trade School Committee consists of five members of the Society. The Committee awards scholarship in the New York Trade School. The Committee makes periodical visits to the Trade School to review the progress of students who were the recipients of scholarships and to encourage them to successful efforts.



## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership Committee consists of seven members of the Society. The Committee interviews applicants, investigates all applications and reports to the Society on questions of admission to membership.

## MUSEUM COMMITTEE

The Museum Committee consists of five members of the Society. The Committee is concerned with all articles of historical and mechanical interest donated to the Museum Department of the Society. Its efforts are directed principally towards proper maintenance of the various exhibits and promoting interest in the Museum, where may be found original manuscripts, medallions, coins, paper money, firearms, stamps and curios of various kinds, as well as the unique and distinguished collection of about 400 locks, which comprise the John M. Mossman Lock Collection.

## AUDITING COMMITTEE

The Auditing Committee consists of five members of the Society. The Committee meets monthly and examines the bills and payrolls of the standing committees and reports to the Society. The Committee also audits all mortgages and insurance coverages and verifies all securities held in safekeeping. Every three months an examination is made of the Treasurer's report and the reports of each Committee. The Committee employs a certified public accountant yearly to certify the reports.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee consists of the chairmen of the various committees. The Vice-President of the Society is the Chairman of the Executive Committee.

The Committee prepares and publishes in each year an annual report of the Society. It presents at the annual meeting a budget of receipts and expenditures for the current year.

It reports to the Society on any question referred to it, or on any subject of interest or benefit to the Society. This includes the granting of annual pensions to the employees under the jurisdiction of the Finance Committee, School Committee and Library Committee.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee consists of the chairmen of the standing committees and five other members, usually past Presidents, appointed by the President.

The Committee nominates candidates for President, Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and members of the Finance Committee.

## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

The Special Committee on Future Development consists of five members of the Society appointed by the President. In recent years, this Committee held many meetings on the revision of the by-laws of the Society. The Special Committee has completed its revision of the by-laws and these were adopted by the Society on November 4, 1959.



Original membership certificate, above, reproduces a Society motto, "By Hammer and Hand, All Arts Do Stand." Painting, at right, a gift to the Society, is on exhibition in the Assembly Room.



## Past Presidents

A complete list of the Past Presidents of this Society for one hundred and seventy-five years is made a part of this history namely:

YEAR	PRESIDENT	YEAR	PRESIDENT
1785	ROBERT BOYD	1832	BENJAMIN DE MILT
1786	ROBERT BOYD	1833	PHILIP HENRY
1787	JOHN CAMPBELL	1834	EDWIN B. CLAYTON
1788	JOHN CAMPBELL	1835	ADONIRAM CHANDLER
1789	ANTHONY POST	1836	THOMAS CONSTANTINE
1790	JOHN STAGG	1837	SHEPHERD KNAPP
1791	JONATHAN POST	1838	ANSON BAKER
1792	ROBERT BOYD	1839	CORNELIUS C. JACOBUS
1793	ANTHONY POST	1840	ELEUTHEROS D. COMSTOCK
1794	JOHN STAGG	1841	SAMUEL ROOME
1795	GABRIEL FIRMAN	1842	LINUS W. STEVENS
1796	JACOB SHERRED	1843	JAMES VAN NORDEN
1797	SEABURY CHAMPLAIN	1844	SHIVERS PARKER
1798	JAMES TYLEE	1845	JACOB A. WESTERVELT
1799	PETER H. WENDOVER	1846	THOMAS C. CHARDAVOYNE
1800	DANIEL HITCHCOCK	1847	JOHN P. MOORE
1801	JACOB SHERRED	1848	JAMES PHYFE
1802	ABRAHAM LABAGH	1849	FRANCIS W. EDMONDS
1803	JAMES WARNER	1850	SYLVANUS S. WARD
1804	JOHN SLIDELL, JR.	1851	ISAAC FRYER
1805	FRANCIS COOPER	1852	HENRY T. INGALLS
1806	AUGUSTUS WRIGHT	1853	JOHN T. B. MAXWELL
1807	WILLIAM G. MILLER	1854	THOMAS JEREMIAH
1808	ALEXANDER CAMPBELL	1855	JAMES MORRIS
1809	STEPHEN ALLEN	1856	CHARLES M. LEUPP
1810	GEORGE IRELAND	1857	THOMAS EARLE
1811	JOHN J. LABAGH	1858	IRA HUTCHINSON
1812	JACOB LORILLARD	1859	GEORGE W. FARNHAM
1813	PETER SHARP	1860	JOHN A. BUNTING
1814	JONAS MAPES	1861	JOHN WRIGHT
1815	ABRAHAM VAN NEST	1862	NOAH WORRALL
1816	THOMAS C. TAYLOR	1863	MATTHIAS BLOODGOOD
1817	JOSEPH SMITH	1864	GEORGE R. JACKSON
1818	JOHN MCCOMB, JR.	1865	GEORGE F. NESBITT
1819	PETER H. WENDOVER	1866	JOHN T. CONOVER
1820	GORDON LEE	1867	WADE B. WORRALL
1821	ELAM WILLIAMS	1868	WILSON SMALL
1822	WILLIAM MANDEVILLE	1869	CORNELIUS H. DELEMATER
1823	JOHN W. HINTON	1870	ADOLPHUS F. OCKERHAUSEN
1824	JOHN LANG	1871	GEORGE J. BYRD
1825	JOHN SUTPHEN	1872	JAMES J. BURNET
1826	THOMAS RICHARDS	1873	HENRY WILSON
1827	THOMAS R. MERCEIN	1874	WILLIAM H. GEDNEY
1828	RICHARD E. MOUNT	1875	WILLIAM OTIS MUNROE
1829	ANDREW SITCHER	1876	HAVILAH M. SMITH
1830	STEPHEN B. YOUNG	1877	EDWIN DOBBS
1831	BRIGHAM HOWE	1878	HENRY L. SLOTE



YEAR	PRESIDENT	YEAR	PRESIDENT
1879	JOHN R. VOORHIS	1920	RUDOLPH P. MILLER
1880	ALEXANDER GAW	1921	JAMES HOPKINS
1881	JOHN BANTA	1922	FRANCIS N. HOWLAND
1882	JOHN J. TUCKER	1923	RONALD TAYLOR
1883	DANIEL HERBERT	1924	EDMUND F. RATTEY
1884	JOHN R. ROGERS	1925	ERNST LAUCKHARDT
1885	JOHN H. WAYDELL	1926	STEPHEN M. SMITH
1886	CHARLES T. GALLOWAY	1927	ALEXANDER C. WALKER
1887	GILBERT J. BURNETT	1928	HENRY D. MOELLER
1888	WILLIAM C. SMITH	1929	JOSIAH S. LINDSAY
1889	ROBERT RUTTER	1930	JOHN E. WADE
1890	ALBERT G. BOGERT	1931	JOSEPH L. HERNON
1891	OLIVER BARRATT	1932	HARVEY A. PATTERSON
1892	JOSEPH J. LITTLE	1933	HARRY BAILEY
1893	GUY GULGIN	1934	ANDREW H. DYKES
1894	JOHN L. HAMILTON	1935	WILLIAM J. T. GETTY
1895	WARREN A. CONOVER	1936	OTTO GRIMMER
1896	GEORGE E. HOE	1937	GEORGE B. SOMERVILLE
1897	WILLIAM STONEBACK	1938	JAMES M. FORBES
1898	ROBERT CHRISTIE	1939	SIDNEY H. CARPENTER
1899	CHARLES A. COWEN	1940	FRANK B. LASETTE
1900	STEPHEN M. WRIGHT	1941	W. W. ROBERTSON
1901	FRANK E. CONOVER	1942	GEORGE J. THOMSON
1902	WILLIAM H. OLIVER	1943	ROBERT M. SYPHER
1903	CHARLES W. HOFFMAN	1944	WILLIAM A. ALLEN
1904	JOHN BEATTIE	1945	GEORGE F. BODFISH, JR.
1905	WILLIAM E. STRAUCH	1946	GEORGE S. CARR
1906	NILES G. WHITE	1947	JOHN C. WANDELL
1907	HUGH GETTY	1948	GEORGE COLES STEPHEN
1908	FREDERICK R. USHER	1949	ROBERT A. FASH
1909	WILLIAM J. HOE	1950	WILLIAM E. GOLDING
1910	JOHN H. McCULLAGH	1951	GEORGE B. FEARN
1911	WILLIAM S. MILLER	1952	ANDREW G. HAGSTROM
1912	ALEXANDER WALKER	1953	JOHN T. O'CONNOR
1913	GEORGE D. HILYARD	1954	FRANK C. PANUSKA
1914	LEWIS W. HARRINGTON	1955	ROBERT M. SYPHER, JR.
1915	CHARLES J. RICHTER	1956	DAVID J. ERBE
1916	ALBERT T. STRAUCH	1957	EDWARD A. MALTBY
1917	JAMES BOYD	1958	ANTHONY E. ZIPPRICH
1918	CHARLES H. FOX	1959	FRANCIS J. SYPHER
1919	FRANK E. WISE	1960	JOSEPH A. U'SELLIS



*Memorial tablet to the founders of the Society.*

## \* Gifts to the Society

Many persons who are interested in the Society and the work which it does have given thought to making contributions to the Society during their lifetime or to making bequests to the Society in their wills.

Anyone wishing to make a donation during his lifetime, may discuss the matter with an officer of the Society.

For those who wish to help perpetuate this work through bequests in their wills, it is suggested that the following form and phraseology be used to insure that their wishes meet all the legal requirements of such bequests:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ give and bequeath to the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen of the City of New York, incorporated March 14, 1792, under the laws of the State of New York, the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ to be applied to the uses and purposes of said incorporation.

\* Gifts are deductible for income tax and estate tax purposes.





